

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NPS use only

received

date entered

APR - 7 1983

1. Name

historic Cole European Hotel

and/or common Cole Hotel (preferred)

2. Location

street & number 401-07 N. P. Ave. _____ not for publication

city, town Fargo _____ vicinity of

state North Dakota code 38 county Cass code 017

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name ARK Enterprises

street & number Box 2394

city, town Fargo _____ vicinity of state North Dakota 58108

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Cass County Courthouse, Register of Deeds

street & number 211 S. 9th St.

city, town Fargo _____ state North Dakota 58103

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Cole Hotel Nomination has this property been determined eligible? _____ yes ☒ no

date Winter, 1983 _____ federal ☒ state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records State Historical Society of North Dakota

city, town Bismarck _____ state North Dakota 58505

7. Description

Condition

☒ excellent
☐ fair
☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Cole Hotel is a three story masonry structure with commercial space and hotel lobby on the first floor, and 43 rooms on the top two floors. It measures 100' along N. P. Avenue, and 75' along 4th St. N. with a 60' one story addition on the avenue.

The principal facades, facing N. P. Avenue and 4th St. S., are faced in a smooth cream-colored hard-faced pressed brick accented with smooth brownish-red pressed brick at the window moldings and cornice. Window sills are of red sandstone. The rear of the building is common cream brick with single double-hung windows and segmented-arched brick lintels.

The distinctive design element of the principal facades is the red brick detailing around the second and third story windows. The polychromatic effect is unique among extant Fargo hotels. Each paired set of windows on the second story, surmounted with window transoms, is surrounded by a 12" wide red brick molding "tabbed" at the corners and above the set. The red brick molding continues above the second story windows rising in an arch to encompass a single window at the third story. The third story molding is again "tabbed" at the springing line of the arch. Small red brick consoles decorate the red sandstone window sills at the first story windows. Pairs of consoles have survived below the red brick running course between the windows where the bracketted cornice once met the running course. This paired bracketed cornice was removed before 1946, and was replaced with a new flush parapet of red brick.

Kenneth Bergan, a previous owner, knows of no alterations done to the Cole Hotel in the past 40 years.¹ The removal of the cornice and minor changes to storefronts on N. P. Avenue are the only alterations, both minor, to the exterior. Historical photographs² indicate that storefronts are original except for some infill of original glass window transoms, new plate glass, and changes to the entry to the Pink Pussycat bar, at the corner of 4th St. S. and N. P. Avenue.

On the rear of the lot, facing 4th St. S., is a one story red brick commercial addition to the hotel of masonry construction erected by Edward E. Cole, who originally owned the hotel. The north wall of the hotel is a party wall with the addition. The purpose of this addition is unknown, but it has an original showroom window and a garage door facing 4th St. N. This addition is first listed in the city directory at 58-62 4th St. N. as the home of the All-Tread Tire Company in 1928. This structure is in original condition.

The interior of the Cole Hotel is largely intact. The second and third floors contain 43 rooms. Six-panel doors to the rooms on the upper floors are topped by glass transoms. Wide wood moldings surround the doors and windows. Carpet runners cover the hardwood floors in the halls, and some of the rooms' floors have been covered with carpet or linoleum. Walls and ceilings are plain plaster, and acoustic tile suspended ceilings have been installed in a few small areas. Staircases between the second and third floors have hardwood rails with decorative turned spindles. On the west end of the first floor, off the original hotel lobby, an L-shaped stairway has been partially replaced and modified to open directly onto the sidewalk. The lobby is no longer used as such, the hotel having been converted to a residential hotel about ten years ago, and residents have their own outside keys to the building.

¹ Bergan interview, January 25, 1983.

² The Biggest Little City in the World, p. 75.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1909 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The significance of the Cole Hotel derives from its association with Edward E. Cole, and its importance as one of the last remaining second class hotels in Fargo, dating from a period when Fargo was a major crossroads for travellers on principal routes across the upper midwest, and the major distribution point for goods and services in eastern North Dakota and the surrounding region.

Constructed in 1909, the Cole Hotel was built by Edward E. Cole one block east of the Hotel Metropole (formerly at 515-17 N. P. Ave.), which Cole had built and operated in Fargo since 1893. From 1909 until his death in 1933, Cole and his sons, Rudy, Edward H., and Dunbar, managed both hotels successfully. The Metropole catered to first class clients and the Cole Hotel to a broader middle class clientele of farmers, families, and traveling salesmen. Whereas the smaller Cole Hotel operated on the European plan charging rates of 75¢ to \$2.00 a day, the Metropole was on the American plan at rates of \$2.25 to \$3.00 a day.³

The linking of two hotels to cater to different classes of clientele was not a unique practice in Fargo. A similar practice was carried on by the proprietor of the Waldorf (a first class hotel formerly located at 7th St. S. and Main Ave.) and its sister, the Annex hotel (a second class hotel). The extent to which cross-reservations were made between the Metropole and Cole hotels is unknown, but business continued to thrive during the Cole years. Cole maintained steady renters in the storefronts of the Cole Hotel: in the southeast corner was the Armstrong Cafe, in the southwest was Berg's furniture store. Both of Cole's hotels, conveniently located a block away from each other, drew traveling salesmen to their central locations on N. P. Avenue, just north of the Northern Pacific railroad tracks and two blocks east of Broadway, the main business thoroughfare. Sample rooms for salesman were available in the Metropole for commercial salesmen, but there is no evidence of similar facilities being included with the less-expensive rates charged by the Cole.

Cole's sons continued to manage both the Cole and Metropole after his death in 1933. In 1936 Edward H. Cole sold the Cole Hotel to Kenneth Bergan's mother and her partner, while Rudy Cole continued to manage the Metropole for several years. The Metropole was razed sometime after 1950.

According to Bergan, the Cole family was very proud of the Cole Hotel. Edward E. Cole used to boast that the Cole Hotel was one of the first buildings in town to use a poured concrete basement. Cole had a reputation for using the best materials he could find. Evidence of this can be seen in the high quality of the hard faced brick and careful workmanship of the brick layer, in the wide hallways on the second and third floors, in the extensive use of decorative woodwork on the upper floors, and in the excellent condition of the building today.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Fargo North, N. Dak.

Quadrangle scale 7.5' Series

UTM References

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Zone Easting Northing

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Keeney and Devitt's Addition Block 2, Lots 9, 10, 11, 12 Fargo, North Dakota.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Norene A. Roberts, Ph.D.

organization Historical Research, Inc.

date February 6, 1983

street & number 5535 Richmond Curve

telephone (612)929-2921

city or town Minneapolis

state Minnesota 55410

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

James E. Sherry

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 3/22/83

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date

5/9/83

for *Alfred Byers*
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Edward E. Cole (1857-1933), born in Illinois and college educated, moved to Fargo during the first Dakota Boom in 1881. He began his commercial career in the real estate and loan business. His entry into hostelry dates from the Fargo Fire of 1893, which destroyed 90 per cent of downtown Fargo, including all the first class hotels. Cole met the need with the erection of the Metropole. His business acumen, tact, and prominence as a hotel owner led to his election as a state legislator where he served in the house during the 1897 session. His popularity is attested to by the fact that he was elected in a strong Republican district, despite his decided affiliation with the Democrats. As a leading hotel man from Fargo, Cole was also active in the North West Hotel Men's Association, becoming a vice-president of that organization in 1908. When the Cole Hotel was built in 1909, Cole was a representative from the first ward to the Fargo City Council. By 1911, he had become president of the city council.

The Cole Hotel is located on the eastern edge of downtown Fargo. On the 400 block across N. P. Avenue from the hotel, the city of Fargo has recently razed several buildings in order to construct a new transit terminal for bus traffic. The current owners of the Cole Hotel plan to do a certified rehabilitation of the building, and either leave the entire hotel as a residential hotel, or use the third floor for residential purposes and restore the second floor to a hotel for travelers using the new transit terminal across the street to the south.

The area east of downtown in which the Cole Hotel is located has suffered a decline and much demolition in recent years. The blocks north of the Cole were razed and are now the sites of new civic buildings. On N. P. Avenue, the Cole hotel, at 401-07, is one of the four intact historic buildings which anchor the east end of N. P. Avenue. Of the numerous hotels which once dotted the east end of N. P. Avenue (Metropole, NP Hotel, Webster, and Tweeden), only the Cole remains. The Cole Hotel is one of the few survivors of Fargo hotels during the heyday of downtown hotel construction. Of the 28 hotels, for example, listed downtown in the 1917 Fargo city directory, only seven remain, of which the Cole is one. It is one of only three second class hotels remaining in the city, the other two of which are the Fargoan and The Viking, at 413-15 and 311-17 Broadway. Of the three, the Cole Hotel is the most vulnerable to city renewal plans.

³ Fargo-Moorhead City Directory (Fargo: Charles Pettibone and Co., 1913) p. 19.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY:

The Biggest Little City in the World: A Glimpse of Fargo. Fargo, N.D.: July, 1910, p. 75 (historic photograph).

"Biographical Sketches of Representative Citizens of Cass County, N.D." Atlas of Cass County, N.D. 1906, p. 143.

Cass County Register of Deeds, Cass County Courthouse House, Abstract of Title, #12195, 13121, 13122, 7273.

Department of Inspections, Fargo City Hall, Fargo, N.D. City permit books for 1903-07, 1907, 1908-10 and City Assessor's list of property owners.

Fargo city directories (variously published under Beckwith, Pettibone, and R. L. Polk and Co.), 1882-1948.

Fargo Forum, 1908-1910. See July 28, 1908, p. 10.

Fargo and Moorhead City Directory. Fargo: Pettibone and Co., 1913, p. 19 (ads for Cole and Metropole hotels).

History of the Red River Valley, Past and Present. Vol. 1 Herald Printing Co: Grand Forks, N.D. and C. F. Cooper and Co.: Chicago, 1909, p. 523.

"The Legislature." The Record magazine. Vol. 2. Number 8 (February, 1897), p. 23; also "The Metropole" Vol. 4, Number 6 (December, 1898), p. 200.

"Hotel Metropole - E. E. Cole, Prop." Northwestern Journal of Progress-Special Edition on Fargo. Chicago, ca. 1903, p. 10.

Minnesota, North and South Dakota and Montana, Gazeteer and Business Directory, 1912-1913, p. 1494 (historic photograph).

Institute of Regional Studies, North Dakota State University, Fargo, N.D.

Personal interview, Kenneth Bergan, former owner of Cole Hotel, 25 January, 1983.

Personal interview, Duane Rogne and Dick Alsop, 23 January - 6 February, 1983.

Sanborn Insurance Maps, 1905, 1910, 1916, 1922, and 1958 updated to 1970.

COLE HOTEL

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